

REMARKS

Claims 58-99 are pending. Claims 58-99 stand rejected. By virtue of this response, no claims are amended, cancelled, or added. Accordingly, claims 58-99 are currently under consideration.

For the Examiner's convenience, Applicants' remarks are presented in the same order in which they were raised in the Office Action.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC §103

A. Claims 58-61, 63, 66, 68-79, and 83-86 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saliba et al. (US 6,558,774) in view of Damer et al (US 6,365,061) and Bouldin et al. (US 4,788,129).

Applicants submit that the Saliba reference is not prior art to the claims of the present application. The Saliba reference was filed August 17, 1999. The present application (filed November 22, 2000) is a divisional patent application of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/361,669, which was filed on July 27, 1999 (and is further a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/046,723, filed March 24, 1998). Accordingly, the Saliba reference is not prior art to the present application and the rejection should be withdrawn and claims 58-61, 63, 66, 68-70, and 83-86 allowed.

B. Claim 62 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saliba et al. (US 6,558,774), Damer et al. (US 6,365,061), and Bouldin et al. (US 4,788,129) as applied to claim 58 and in further view of Abramson et al. (US 3,610,721).

Claim 62 depends from claim 58 and is allowable for at least similar reasons as claim 58 discussed above. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn and claim 62 allowed.

C. Claims 64 and 65 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saliba et al. (US 6,558,774), Damer et al. (US 6,365,061), and Bouldin et al. (US 4,788,129) as applied to claim 58 and in further view of Brodsky et al. (US 6,160,568).

Claims 64 and 65 depend from claim 58 and are allowable for at least similar reasons as claim 58 discussed above. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

D. Claim 67 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saliba et al. (US 6,558,774), Damer et al. (US 6,365,061), and Bouldin et al. (US 4,788,129) as applied to claim 58 and in further view of Braitberg (US 4,136,347).

Claim 67 depends from claim 58 and is allowable for at least similar reasons as claim 58 discussed above. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn and the claim allowed.

E. Claims 80-82 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saliba et al. (US 6,558,774), Damer et al. (US 6,365,061), and Bouldin et al. (US 4,788,129) as applied to claim 58 above and in further view of Saito et al. (US 5,982,592) and Kosarko et al. (US 4,833,556).

Claims 80-82 depend from claim 58 and are allowable for at least similar reasons as claim 58 discussed above. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

F. Claims 87-94 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saliba et al. (US 6,558,774), Damer et al. (US 6,365,061), and Bouldin et al. (US 4,788,129) as applied to claim 58 above and in further view of Ueyanagi (US 6,396,776).

Claims 87-94 depend from claim 58 and are allowable for at least similar reasons as claim 58 discussed above. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn and the claim allowed.

G. Claims 95, 96, and 99 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saliba et al. (US 6,558,774) in view of Damer et al. (US 6,365,061), Bouldin et al. (US 4,788,129), and Abramson (US 3,610,721).

As stated above, Saliba is not prior art to the claims of the present application. The Saliba reference was filed August 17, 1999, and the present application is a divisional U.S. Patent Application No. 09/361,669, filed on July 27, 1999. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

H. Claims 97 and 98 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saliba et al. (US 6,558,774), Damer et al. (US 6,365,061) and Bouldin et al. (US 4,788,129) as applied to claim 95 above and in further view of Saito et al. (US 5,982,592).

Claims 97 and 98 depend from claim 95 and are allowable for at least similar reasons as claim 95 discussed above. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn and the claim allowed.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 249212007010. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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